

# MAY

at the

ALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

## MAY MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, May 12, 8:15 p.m.

PLACE: Morrison Auditorium

PEAKER: Wilfred Blunt

SUBJECT: "THE ART OF BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION"

Mr. Blunt, distinguished in his field as artist, writer and scholar, is visiting this country from his native England.

In his lecture as in his well-known book with the same title, Mr. Blunt traces the development of plant illustration from the earliest crude efforts of cave-dwellers to the modern and highly technical paintings and drawings of today.

The author of many successful books, Mr. Blunt has just recently returned from an extended trip to Iran. He has been Curator of the Watts Gallery near Guildford in Surrey since 1959 and a member of the Advisory Committee for the Hunt Botanical Library for the past three years. His current horticulture interest is poppies.

On display in the foyer will be various examples of botanical illustration chosen from the collections in the Mailliard Library.

## MORRISON PLANETARIUM

Beginning May 5, "PLANETARIUM ON PARADE." This is a particularly popular show—a kind of celestial three-ring circus with its look-behind-the-scenes at how the star projector works. This sky show is a "must" for your family and friends.

Performances daily at 3:30 p.m. with evening shows, Wednesday through Sunday, at 8:30. Extra matinees at 2:00 on Saturday and Sunday. Closed on Monday and Tuesday evenings.



## MORRISON AUDITORIUM

Continuing in the Science Theatre on weekends is the Academy-produced documentary, "SEA OF CORTEZ," about exploration and research in the Gulf of California. Performances Saturdays and Sundays at 12:45, 2:15, and 3:45 p.m.

## SPECIAL EXHIBITS

Exhibit of the Month: "DR. ANDREW RANDALL," a recently acquired painting of an original founder of the Academy. Main Foyer, Science Museum.

"PLANT PORTRAITS," exquisite prints of botanical subjects by Henry Evans, San Francisco artist, continues through June 30.

**"SCIENCE IN ACTION"** (Schedule for viewers in the San Francisco Bay Area: Tuesday evenings, 6:30 p.m., KTVU-TV, Channel 2. For other areas, see the TV listings in your local paper.)

Week of  
May 2: "MALARIA TODAY," with Guest Scientist Edgar A. Smith, U. S. Agency for International Development.  
May 9: "THE BRAIN," with Bertram Feinstein, M. D., and Dr. Benjamin Libet, Mt. Zion Neurological Institute.  
May 16: "AMPHIBIANS," with Dr. Alan E. Leviton, California Academy of Sciences.  
May 23: "DIVING SAUCERS," with Dr. Carl L. Hubbs and Dr. E. W. Fager, Scripps Institution of Oceanography.  
May 30: "CAPE KENNEDY," Part I, with James E. Webb, Administrator, NASA.

## NEWS and NOTES . . . . .

SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS IN THE ACADEMY could use interested volunteers. This is a direct appeal to anyone who may have time on his hands and would like to devote some of it assisting in Academy activities. The present call for help is for the following:

The Exhibits Department is in need of someone trained or more than casually interested in anthropology. The Academy has a mass of anthropological material which, for want of personnel, has never been organized either geographically or culturally into proper categories. An average skill at typing would be necessary and the ability to make rough sketches would help. Telephone Mr. Carson at the Academy.

The Mailliard Library can use several volunteers with no special qualifications. Typing skill could be

utilized but is not necessary. The only specification is that those volunteering will be asked to devote at least one day a week for the next several months. Ask for Mr. Brian.

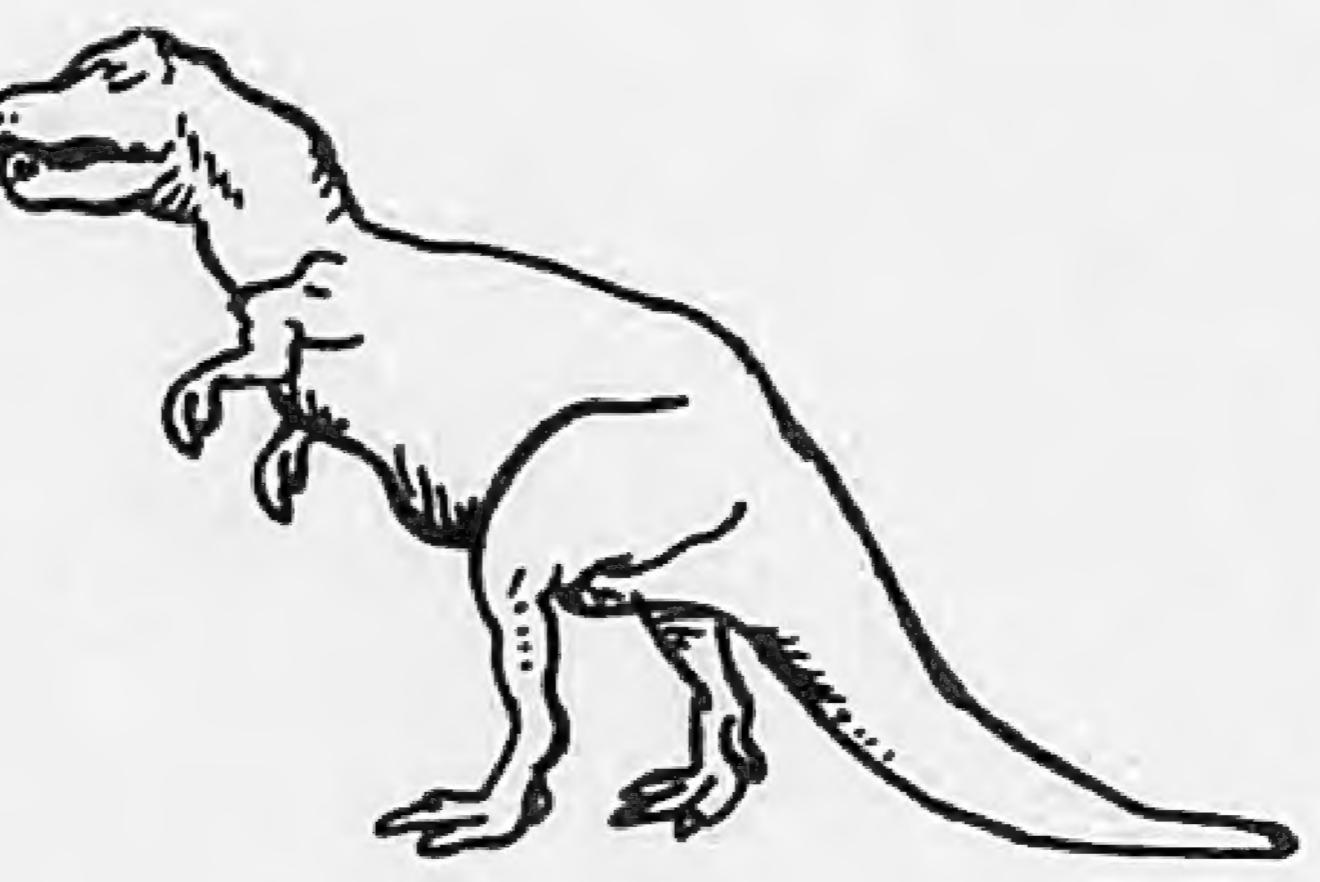
The Picture Collection needs the assistance of a volunteer with some background in or knowledge of things zoological (other than birds since we have an expert in this field). Ask for Mr. Kooy.

The Public Information Office could use help in making a survey pertinent to northern California newspapers. No particular qualifications except patience in a project that will take only a limited amount of time. Ask for Mr. Richardson.

## THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF

Mr. Robert Porter, a local commercial fisherman, and his trawler "Mary Ann," the Departments of Ichthyology and Invertebrate Zoology have interesting additions to their collections. Mr. Porter, particularly concerned with supplying such delicacies as petrale sole and black cod for discriminating diners, must drag some 300 fathoms (or some 1800 feet—or a quarter mile—down) to procure them. Because of his interest in the Academy, he has been thoughtful enough to gather other specimens not heretofore in the collections, principally because of the depth at which the animals are found.

As a result, Ichthyology now has a variety of Catsharks, Eelpouts, Snailfish and Slickheads, and Invertebrate Zoology has newly added specimens of starfish, octopi, crabs and sea anemones.



APROPOS NOTHING IN PARTICULAR, did you know that the word "Dinosauria" was invented as recently as 1842 by the great English paleontologist, Sir Richard Owen? Translated from the Greek, it means "Terrible Lizard," the title of a newly-completed exhibit in Fossil Hall. Other new displays in the same area are "From Fish to Fossil" and "Fossil Plants—Ancient Climate."

ON APRIL 8, CASE NO. 133 IN THE reptile-amphibian area of Steinhart Aquarium became a lying-in hospital when our 60-pound, 10-foot South American boa constrictor (*Constrictor c. constrictor*) became the proud parent of 32 offspring. The accouchement, witnessed by hundreds of visitors, took about two hours and was a cause of rejoicing for herpetologists on Steinhart's staff, it being the first such boa birth in Aquarium history.

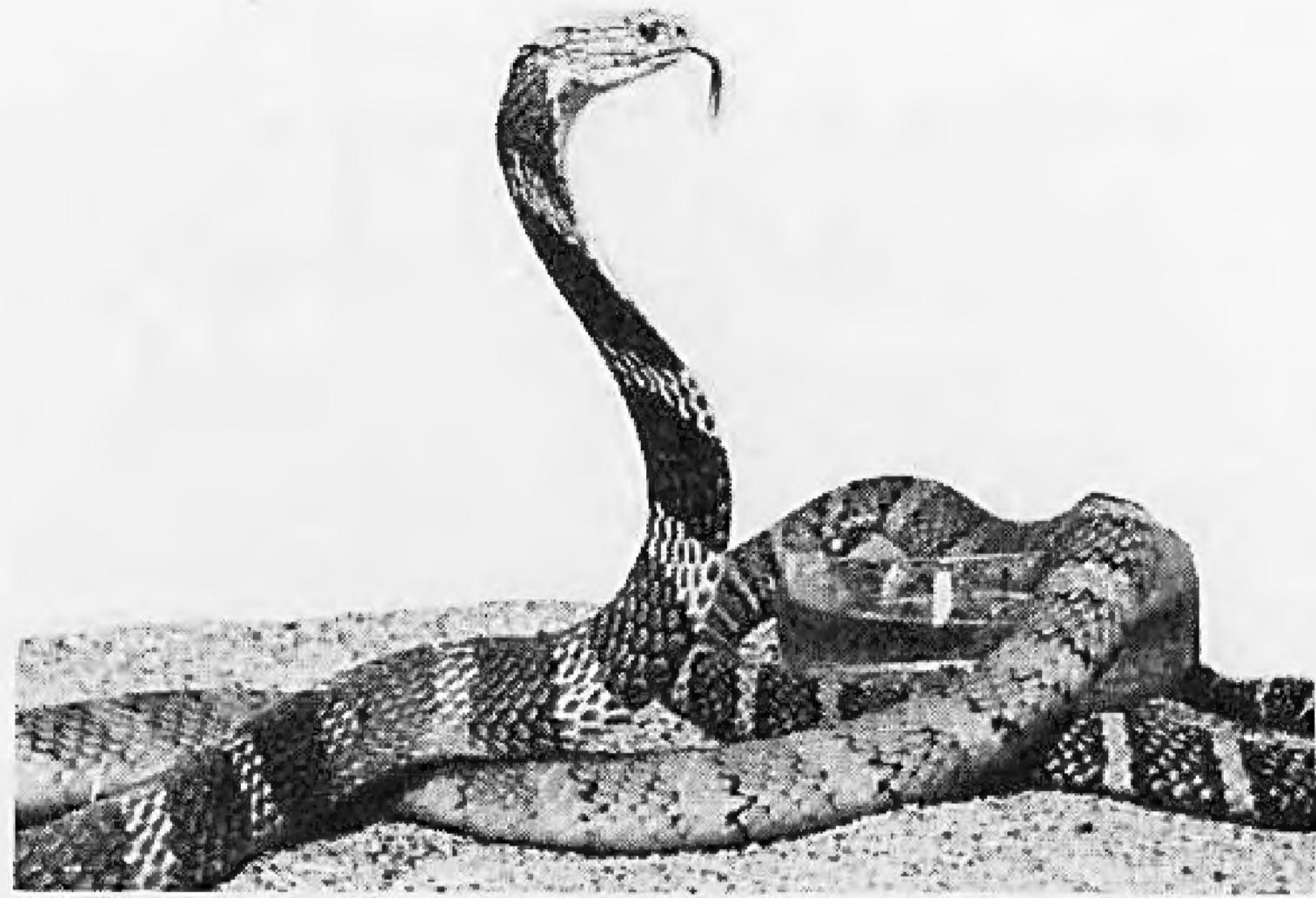
At this writing, all of the litter are doing well with 12 of them on display. The family was sired at the Academy, the multiparous mother having been boain-residence since 1959.

## THE MAUDE REX ALLEN

LAMP COLLECTION has never glowed brighter. Through the generosity of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company who contributed both the new lighting fixtures and the cost of installation to the Academy, this prized group of lamps and other illuminating devices literally shines twice as bright as before. The exhibit is located in an alcove off the Hall of Science in the Planetarium building.

MISCELLANEA: Under construction in the Instrument Shop are three projection orreries designated for two outside agencies and one slated for use in our own Morrison Planetarium. When finished, the complicated instruments will be installed in planetaria at San Luis Obispo and at Diablo Valley College at Martinez. . . . Curator of Ichthyology W. I. Follett is co-author, with V. D. Vladykov of the University of Ottawa, of a recently published paper entitled "*Lampetra richardsoni*, a New Non-parasitic Species of Lamprey (Petromyzonidae) from Western North America," published in the Journal of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada, Volume 22, No. 1.





## FROM THE ACADEMY COLLECTIONS

In the Animal Kingdom, one finds that every class has one specimen that is unique. With reptiles, it is the King Cobra, *Ophiophagus hannah*, which comes from Asia and the Philippines. It is the longest venomous snake in the world, reaching a maximum length of about 18 feet. The scientific name refers to its habit of feeding on other snakes. A 14-foot specimen kept at the New York Zoological Park in the late 20s devoured 145 feet of Indigo Snakes, *Drymarchon* sp., in nine months.

Pictured above is the first King Cobra ever to be exhibited at Steinhart Aquarium and by far the most prized specimen in the entire reptile collection. He is a recently acquired young male and is approximately 10 feet long.

The King Cobra is the most intelligent and cunning snake in the world. In captivity, they can learn the position of cage doors, recognize their keeper, and in some cases, even resent strangers working near their cage. They keep a close eye on everything that moves and their large, bright eyes suggest the knowing stare of the hunter. When surprised in the wild, a 14-foot King Cobra will usually hood better than four feet above the ground, an impressive sight indeed.

They are an egg-laying species that build a semi-nest and to some extent protect the nest site.

The King Cobra ranks very high on the list of "the most poisonous snakes" in the world." The venom is strongly neurotoxic, destroying the nerve cells and retarding the respiratory system.

The lion may be called King of Beasts, but a bite from the King Cobra could leave His Majesty nothing but a royal memory. The King in the world of reptiles is second to none.

KARL SWITAK & GLENN BURGHARDT

Photo by Art Frisch  
Courtesy San Francisco Chronicle

## NEW MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMY

### Regular Membership

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THE CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
GOLDEN GATE PARK • SAN FRANCISCO 94118

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No. 305 — Published Monthly by the

CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

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MAY 1965

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